

Mr. Speaker, today, tens of thousands of Americans are celebrating Bike to Work Day by using bicycles to get to their place of employment. They are reinforcing the notion that using a bicycle can be fun; it can provide a healthy and convenient alternative to the private automobile. It will illustrate the impact that small steps can take to improve our quality of life.

At a time when we in Congress are worried about the health of the District of Columbia, when we are concerned about the funding of the Washington Area Mass Transit Authority, when we are looking at almost a billion dollars just to replace the Wilson Bridge here in the metropolitan area, and when, in Washington, D.C., consistently, the congestion is ranked in the top five in the country, bicycles make sense.

There is another simple step that we can take to improve the quality of life, and that is using more effectively the \$10 billion investment that we have made in the Washington Area Metro System. It, too, is a way to save money, protect the environment, and improve the quality of life. It has been part of the Federal policy for years to promote the use of transit as an alternative to the single occupant vehicle.

In my community of Portland, Oregon, we promote that alternative by using transit passes as a way to make it easier for employees while we save money. There are over 60 individual companies that provide transit passes to over 45,000 people in the community.

Just this last month, the largest private sector employer in Oregon, Intel, developed a program that is providing free passes for all 11,000 of its employees because it makes sense for the company and for the community.

Here in Washington, D.C., we have over 1,000 employers in the private sector, over 100 Federal agencies that together provide transit checks for over 50,000 commuters in the metropolitan area. Even the United States Senate for the last 6 years has provided transit passes for its employees who do not get free parking.

I would suggest that it is time for us in the House of Representatives to take a step back and look at our policies to get in step with what we suggest the rest of America could do. If only 5 percent of our employees used the transit program, one-half the percentage in the United States Senate, we could eliminate this parking on the parking lot immediately adjacent to the Washington Capitol South Metro Station. We could obviously save the upkeep, the 24-hour-a-day staffing that is there to protect the cars, and we could convert that block into a

higher and better use. Certainly there are a number of opportunities for one of the most valuable pieces of real estate in Washington, D.C.

I have introduced House Resolution 37; and, currently, there are over 180 of my colleagues that have cosponsored it. I would suggest that it is time for the remaining people in the House to take a step back, think about what is good for the environment, think about what is fair for our employees, to not simply provide up to \$2,000 a year of free parking but provide an alternative for our employees who decide to do the right thing, protecting the environment by using mass transit.

It is good for the environment. It is good for our employees. It is a simple step to use our land more thoughtfully. Most important, it gets the House of Representatives in step with the Senate, with the rest of the Federal bureaucracy, and with what we are telling the private sector to do.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in sponsoring House Resolution 37.